

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
SSM-03 HA-05 /084 W
-----031466 171654Z /43

O 171447Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 689
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN 1216
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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JERUSALEM PASS TO SECRETARY'S PARTY

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT IS
SUBJ: DMC SPLIT AVERTED

REF.: TEL AVIV 666

1. A THREATENED SPLIT OF THE DMC WAS AT LEAST TEMPORARILY
AVERTED YESTERDAY FOLLOWING A SERIES OF INFORMAL AND FORMAL
MEETINGS OF PARTY LEADERS AND ACTIVISTS THROUGHOUT THE
DAY. IN A MEETING OF THE DMC SECRETARIAT AND KNESSET
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FACTION, PARTY REBELS AGREED TO DEFER IMPLEMENTING THEIR
INTENTION TO BOLT THE PARTY UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING OF THE
135-MAN DMC COUNCIL, SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 25, AT WHICH
TIME THE INTERNAL STATE OF THE PARTY WILL BE DISCUSSED.
LATER THAT DAY (JANUARY 16) PARTY DISSIDENTS MET AT
WHAT MANY EXPECTED WOULD BE THE OCCASION FOR LAUNCHING
A NEW PARTY AND, INSTEAD, ENDORSED THE DECISION TO HOLD

OFF ON ANY WALKOUT.

2. DMC HEAD YIGAEI YADIN SAID HE WILL HOLD A SERIES OF MEETINGS UP TO THE TIME THE COUNCIL WILL MEET NEXT WEEK IN AN EFFORT TO MEND THE RIFT. HOWEVER, OTHER THAN THIS EFFORT AND HIS AGREEMENT TO PLACE THE PARTY'S INTERNAL PROBLEMS ON THE COUNCIL'S AGENDA, HE GAVE LITTLE INDICATION OF RECEPTIVITY TO THE REBELS' DEMANDS. AS AIRED YESTERDAY THESE INCLUDE: CHANGES IN THE FUNCTIONING AND MANAGEMENT OF THE DMC'S KNESSET FACTION; RENEWED EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF ELECTORAL REFORM AND A LAW LIMITING THE ACTIVITIES OF POLITICAL PARTIES; CONSIDERATION OF AN INITIATIVE TO REDUCE THE SIZE OF THE CABINET; INCREASING THE POWERS OF THE DMC COUNCIL; REPLACING MEIR ZOREA ON THE KNESSET'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE COMMITTEE (BECAUSE OF HIS SUPPORT FOR NEW SETTLEMENTS IN THE TERRITORIES); AND REPLACING YADIN WITH AMNON RUBINSTEIN AS CHAIRMAN OF THE DMC SECRETARIAT.

3. AT LAST NIGHT'S MEETING OF THE DISSIDENTS, ESSENTIALLY A GATHERING OF SUPPORTERS OF THE PARTY'S SHINUI FACTION, THE GENERAL SENTIMENT WAS OPPOSED TO LEAVING THE PARTY AT THIS TIME. MK STEF WERTHEIMER, WHO SPOKE OF THIS FRUSTRATION WITH THE PARTY'S INACTION ON BEHALF OF ITS PRINCIPLES, ALSO COUNSELED DELAY. MK SHMUEL TOLEDANO, ONE OF THE LOUDEST CRITICS OF THE PARTY'S CONDITION, SAID HE WAS PREPARED TO PAUSE BEFORE TAKING AN IRREVOCABLE STEP BECAUSE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AT LONG LAST THE MALAISE IS RECEIVING AN OPEN HEARING. RUBINSTEIN ALSO SUPPORTED A DEFERRAL.

19M COMMENT: WITH A SPLIT AND EVEN DISSOLUTION A STRONG LIKELIHOOD, THE PARTY'S GRASSROOTS ARE NOW URGING AN ALL-OUT EFFORT AT UNITY AND A MENDING OF WAYS. THEY ARE PRESSING THE MKS TO RECONCILE THEIR DIFFERENCES, BROUGHT TO A HEAD LAST WEEK BY THE DMC'S HUMILIATING DEFEAT IN THE KNESSET COMMITTEE ON THE QUESTION OF WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS (REFTTEL). HOWEVER, THE STRONGEST CONSTRAINT ON ACTION BY THE REBELS APPEARS TO BE THE FEAR OF UPSETTING PEACE NEGOTIATIONS BY BOLTING. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE MOST VOCIFEROUS ADVOCATE OF SPLITTING, MK MORDECHAI WIRSHUBSKI, TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT ALTHOUGH INTERFERING WITH THE PEACE TALKS IS THE LAST THING HE WANTED TO DO, HE HAS NO FEAR OF A CABINET CRISIS RESULTING FROM A SPLIT. HE SAID THE REBELS WOULD REMAIN IN THE COALITION, MAINTAINING THE GOVERNMENT'S MAJORITY, AND A REDISTRIBUTION OF ONE PORTFOLIO, IF REQUIRED, COULD BE EASILY ACCOMPLISHED. WE ARE NOT SO SURE. THE RUMP DMC MIGHT BALK AT ADJUSTING TO CABINET REPRESENTATION INFERIOR TO THE NRP IF, SAY, A THIRD OF ITS MKS BOLTED. THIS COULD WELL REQUIRE YADIN TO YIELD THE DEPUTY PREMIERSHIP AND, IN GENERAL, THE TRANSI-

TION COULD UPSET THE CABINET'S PRESENT DELICATE BALANCE.
WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION CLOSELY. LEWIS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTY DISSENSION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV00777
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780024-1189
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780153/aaaabsjw.tel
Line Count: 118
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 88bfcfe2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 TEL AVIV 666
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3759383
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DMC SPLIT AVERTED
TAGS: PINT, IS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/88bfcfe2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014